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IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS

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ENHANCEMENT OF AFRICAN PEACEKEEPING CAPACITY

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 89 of its report of 28 June 1997 (A/52/209), the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations recommended that the United Nations give particular attention to strengthening the institutional capacity of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), to organizing training programmes for military personnel of African countries and to mobilizing assistance, in particular logistical and financial support to African peacekeeping capacity and to the activities of OAU in conflict prevention, management and resolution. It requested me to report to the General Assembly on measures taken to this end. In paragraph 111 of its report of 21 May 1998 (A/53/127), the Special Committee reaffirmed these recommendations, and reiterated its interest in receiving a report in this regard.

2. The present report is submitted in response to these requests.

II. DEVELOPMENT OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE ENHANCEMENT OF AFRICAN PEACEKEEPING CAPACITY

3. Notwithstanding its inherent difficulties, peacekeeping remains a vital United Nations instrument in assisting African States to resolve conflicts with the help of the international community and to create the conditions for peaceful development. The Organization of African Unity and subregional African organizations are playing an increasingly important role in the management of conflicts on the continent and in contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security. The experience gained so far clearly shows

that the conduct of meaningful peacekeeping activities is contingent upon a genuine desire on the part of conflicting parties to implement peace agreements and move towards reconciliation. At the same time, while regional and subregional commitment to peaceful solutions is essential, the sustained support of the international community can contribute significantly to the success of Africa's efforts to deal with conflicts on the continent.

4. My predecessor's report of 1 November 1995 on improving preparedness for conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa (A/50/711-S/1995/911) outlined a broad strategy in this regard. The international community's focus on this issue intensified following the Security Council's meeting on 25 September 1997, at the level of Foreign Ministers, to consider the need for a concerted effort to promote peace and security in Africa. Pursuant to a request made at that meeting, I presented on 13 April 1998 a report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318), in which I outlined certain broad challenges, together with fundamental principles that should guide efforts to address them.

5. In my report, I noted, in particular, the importance of cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and of support for their initiatives. In recent years, there has been a rapid development within Africa of mechanisms to address conflict. These include ongoing efforts by OAU to strengthen its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, whose establishment in 1993 marked an important step towards enhancing African capacity in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping. Other significant developments include the increasing institutionalization of the peacekeeping capacity of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which is working towards the development of a mechanism for prevention, management and resolution of conflict, in order to enhance its ability to contribute to the promotion of stability within the region. There have also been further efforts by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to build a regional peacekeeping capacity. Important regional and subregional peacemaking and peacekeeping initiatives have taken shape in response to the situations in Burundi, the Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia, among others, and the dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

6. Increased cooperation with regional organizations has played a crucial role in the international community's efforts to promote peace in a number of situations in Africa. The reinforcement of the capacity of African countries to participate in peacekeeping missions remains a key priority, whether those operations take place in the framework of a United Nations peacekeeping mission or in one authorized by the Security Council, but conducted by a regional organization or group of States. My report of 13 April 1998 (A/52/871-S/1998/318) reaffirmed the validity of the proposals contained in the report of 1 November 1995 (A/50/711-S/1995/911) concerning practical steps that can be taken with respect to training assistance, joint peacekeeping exercises, greater African participation in the United Nations standby arrangements, partnerships between countries whose contingents require equipment and donors that are able to assist, and closer cooperation between the United Nations and OAU.

7. However, efforts to enhance African capacity should not relieve the international community of its collective obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, which confers on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Measures aimed at helping Africa should not become a justification for reduced engagement in the continent by the international community. Support by non-African States for African peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts, including the provision of financial and other resources, is likely to continue to prove essential in the foreseeable future. In recent conflicts in Africa, we have also seen abundant evidence of how perceptions of political or historical associations may complicate regional efforts to resolve a conflict, so that direct international involvement, including through deployment of a peacekeeping operation, may be indispensable if peace is to be preserved. In this regard, I welcomed the international community's demonstration of its readiness to act through the deployment of two new operations in 1998, in the Central African Republic and in Sierra Leone, both of which supported regional efforts.

8. Following the release of my report (A/52/871-S/1998/318), the General Assembly and the Security Council undertook an in-depth examination of its recommendations.

9. The General Assembly held a wide-ranging debate on my report under agenda item 164. Following that debate, the General Assembly, at its 81st plenary meeting, on 7 December 1998, adopted resolution 53/92, in which, inter alia, it urged all States to assist in strengthening Africa's capacity to participate in all aspects of peacekeeping operations, in particular through increased cooperation between the United Nations and OAU and between the United Nations and subregional organizations. The Assembly also called for the establishment of an open-ended ad hoc working group to monitor implementation of the recommendations of the report.

10. The Security Council also formed a working group, which has considered the recommendations related to peace and security contained in my report. This process has generated important statements of commitment by Member States, as well as valuable reflections upon a number of difficult questions. These included a presidential statement of 16 September 1998 on strengthening African peacekeeping capacity (S/PRST/1998/28); resolution 1196 (1998) of 16 September 1998 on strengthening the effectiveness of arms sanctions regimes imposed by the Security Council; resolution 1197 (1998) of 18 September 1998 on support for regional and subregional initiatives; resolution 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998 on the provision of security to refugees and maintaining the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements; resolution 1209 (1998) of 19 November 1998 on the problem of illicit arms flows to and in Africa; and a presidential statement of 13 November 1998 on monitoring activities authorized by the Security Council (S/PRST/1998/35).

11. On 24 September 1998, the Security Council held a second ministerial-level meeting to consider the recommendations contained in my report of 13 April 1998. In the presidential statement following the meeting (S/PRST/1998/29), the Security Council, inter alia, urged all States and relevant bodies to provide financial and technical support to strengthen African regional and subregional arrangements for conflict prevention, the maintenance of peace and security and

dispute settlement, and called for an enhanced partnership between the United Nations and African regional and subregional organizations.

III. CURRENT EFFORTS TO ENHANCE AFRICAN PEACEKEEPING CAPACITY

12. In recent years, we have seen a considerable rise in the number of initiatives undertaken to support the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity. I would like to commend those Member States who have provided key assistance, which can help address African peacekeeping needs.

13. The Secretariat has sought to help in the coordination of these bilateral efforts and has also taken various initiatives of its own to enhance African peacekeeping capabilities. An account of the current status of these efforts is provided below.

A. Cooperation with OAU and subregional organizations

14. The United Nations continues to work closely with regional and subregional organizations in the context of specific peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts in Africa. In my report to the General Assembly (A/53/419) I underlined the importance of closer cooperation between the United Nations and OAU, noting the encouraging measures taken to strengthen their cooperation, particularly in the areas of peace and security.

15. In April 1998, the United Nations established a political liaison office with OAU in Addis Ababa. This office can facilitate the exchange of information and coordination of initiatives and efforts between the two organizations. In addition, the United Nations has been working closely with regional and subregional organizations in their effort to address specific conflicts, including those between Ethiopia and Eritrea and in Guinea-Bissau and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

16. The Secretariat has continued to collaborate with OAU to strengthen the latter's capacity to address conflict. In 1997, the Chief of the Situation Centre of the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations travelled to Addis Ababa to assist in strengthening the management of the OAU Situation Room. In May 1998, there was a high-level meeting between the United Nations and OAU secretariats to further develop cooperation and to establish focal points for future discussion. In December 1998, the Chief of the Policy and Analysis Unit of the Department visited Addis Ababa to discuss with OAU representatives ways of assisting the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity.

17. Within the limits of available resources, the Secretariat is prepared to draw upon its pool of current and former staff members, in particular those from African States, in order to facilitate development of the necessary expertise for creation of the OAU Situation Room. Discussions have already begun with OAU in order to arrange a short-term secondment of current or previous personnel of the Department's Situation Centre to the OAU Conflict Management Centre.

18. At the same time, OAU could send some of its staff members to United Nations Headquarters in New York for familiarization with its methods of operation. In this regard, I would like to recall that in the past, funding was made available by Member States to allow African military officers to participate in such exchanges. The development of such programmes could be of significant value to OAU at this juncture and could also help strengthen ongoing links between our two organizations.

19. In the context of its follow-up to my report, the Security Council urged me to consider the possibility of appointing liaison officers to peacekeeping operations of OAU and of subregional organizations in Africa which the Security Council authorizes (see resolution 1197 (1998)). It also expressed readiness to consider the deployment of liaison officers at the headquarters of those organizations (see S/PRST/1998/35). The Secretariat stands ready to deploy such officers, subject to the allocation of the necessary resources.

B. Ongoing capacity-building efforts

1. United Nations standby arrangements

20. The United Nations standby arrangements system has proved to be a useful tool to coordinate needs and resources and can facilitate the establishment of partnerships between Member States that make troops available and countries that are in a position to provide equipment and other support. Through the system, the United Nations addresses issues relating to requirements (troops, equipment, services and so forth) and response time/level of readiness, while helping to build training capacity based on national and regional needs.

21. Over the past 12 months, the Secretariat has focused on enhancing awareness among African States of the functions of the standby arrangements system, and of the potential benefits of participation. A briefing team on standby arrangements visited Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe in June 1998. Over the past year, individual briefings have been given to 18 permanent missions of African Member States; this useful practice will continue, subject to the availability of the necessary resources.

22. Important progress has been made as a result of these efforts. Ten African Member States joined the standby arrangements system in 1998. One African State signed a formal memorandum of understanding with the United Nations during the year. However, as of December 1998, only 22 of the 52 African Member States were participating in the standby arrangements system.

23. Broader African participation within the standby arrangements system is needed in order to strengthen the United Nations capacity to deploy peacekeeping operations within the continent and beyond. It also represents an important means to increase information flow among States, and to promote long-term development of African peacekeeping capacity. In this context, the Secretariat is currently reviewing the possibility of dispatching a standby arrangements team to Africa for further briefings and discussions in the course of the year.

2. Training

24. Recognizing the crucial importance of stronger partnership between African and non-African countries, the Secretariat, in close cooperation with OAU, has convened three major meetings over the past 12 months, devoted to the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity.

25. On 5 December 1997, the Secretariat convened an initial meeting in which 59 Member States and OAU participated in a first attempt to exchange views and to develop a cohesive and coherent framework for new initiatives. On 26 May 1998, the Secretariat convened a follow-up African Peacekeeping Training Strategy Session, which was attended by 64 delegations, including 27 African countries and OAU. Subsequently, in July 1998, the Secretariat circulated for comment to all Member States a three-phased training strategy, with short-, medium- and long-term goals.

26. I believe the two meetings brought several major benefits:

- They highlighted the importance of certain principles - transparency, legitimacy and partnership - for enhancing African peacekeeping capacity;
- They provided a better understanding of the training resources available through the United Nations and bilateral arrangements;
- They also served as a forum for information-sharing and the development of a practical approach for future activities to enhance the training capacity of African States.

27. On 21 January 1999, the Secretariat convened a third meeting at United Nations Headquarters. Delegations from 51 Member States, including 27 African countries, as well as OAU, attended the session. Participants reaffirmed their shared view that Africa's peacekeeping capacity should and could be enhanced through various forms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. To this end, they broadly approved the training strategy and the arrangements for information exchange proposed by the United Nations, and endorsed, in principle, the establishment of a working group composed of African and non-African States directly involved in training assistance. While the terms of reference and operational guidelines for such a working group are not yet formally agreed upon, its establishment is considered to be an important practical step forward in enhancing African peacekeeping capacity. In this context, the meeting agreed to explore the possibility of convening one of its future meetings at OAU headquarters. The United Nations intends to vigorously pursue the implementation of the approved tasks for the working group and to further develop the Secretariat's cooperation with OAU, subregional organizations and the donor community in strengthening African peacekeeping capacity.

28. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in close coordination with OAU, has undertaken to serve as the focal point for the collection and dissemination of information on African capacity for peacekeeping. Some information has already been collected as a result, and has allowed the Department to begin the preparation of a database that will be available to all Member States. The

Secretariat welcomes information provided by Member States to date, and encourages communication of further relevant data, all of which will be made widely available through posting on the relevant Web site of the Internet. The provision of scholarships to facilitate the participation of African officers in such programmes could enhance the effectiveness of this effort.

29. The conducting of United Nations training assistance team (UNTAT) and train-the-trainers programmes, as well as support for major peacekeeping exercises, is vital to fulfilling the broad strategy objectives of developing regional peacekeeping capacities and harmonizing training standards among States.

30. Over the past two years, United Nations training activity relating to the enhancement of Africa's peacekeeping capacity has included an UNTAT seminar in Ghana in June 1997, a peacekeeping mission management seminar in Zambia in February 1998, a training assistance visit to Swaziland in March 1998 and a logistics training course in Kenya in June 1998. United Nations training staff also participated in large-scale multinational exercises in Zimbabwe in April 1997 and in Senegal in February 1998. African officers likewise took part in the United Nations train-the-trainer courses in Italy and in an UNTAT seminar in Singapore. The Secretariat is currently planning for seminars that would be held in Nigeria and Zimbabwe during 1999.

31. In view of the increased role of police in peacekeeping operations, recent training and capacity-building activity has included initiatives to strengthen African capacity within in this specific area.

32. In 1997 and 1998, United Nations Civilian Police (UNCIVPOL) selection assistance teams travelled at the invitation of Egypt, Ghana and Senegal to conduct testing of police officers nominated for deployment to United Nations peacekeeping missions, and to advise police authorities in those countries on United Nations predeployment training curricula. In February 1998, the United Nations Civilian Police Adviser addressed a seminar in Durban, South Africa, which was attended by senior police representatives from the SADC region. The Secretariat participated in a two-week regional course for police officers from SADC countries held in Pretoria, South Africa, in November 1998. It is also planning a course in Africa for police trainers from the 18 African countries currently contributing police to peacekeeping operations, for which it is seeking funding and training assistance from Member States.

3. Logistical and financial support

33. Clearly, a major problem facing efficient deployment of African peacekeeping operations has been the availability of logistical capacity. This was identified as a key issue in the Secretariat's previous report on enhancing African peacekeeping capacity. The importance of this issue was also emphasized in the statement made by the President of the Security Council on 16 September 1998 (S/PRST/1998/28), in which the Secretary-General was requested to study ways to improve the availability of logistics support for peacekeeping efforts in Africa.

34. Although logistics experts from the United Nations Secretariat have participated in training efforts in Africa, the current capability of the Secretariat is not sufficient to tackle a problem of this scale. Effective measures would need sustained and coordinated partnerships between African and non-African States. I hope that the working group referred to in paragraph 27 above will help to address this pressing issue.

35. Despite the obvious needs, resources to support the Secretariat's efforts to enhance African peacekeeping capacity continue to be provided on a relatively small scale and on a case-by-case basis. In recognition of the fact that full implementation of the proposals in my predecessor's report would require additional financial resources, the United Nations Trust Fund for Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping in Africa was established to enable interested Member States to assist these efforts.

36. It would be unrealistic to expect the Trust Fund to provide all of the funding necessary for training activities or substitute for bilateral or multilateral programmes. However, it can prove to be a useful tool, and can act effectively as seed money, particularly in combination with additional bilateral and multilateral contributions by Member States. Recently, Trust Fund resources have been used to help support the participation of United Nations experts in the training activities in Ghana and Zambia, the peacekeeping logistics course in Kenya, and the efforts of the Standby Arrangements Unit to increase the participation of African States.

37. To date, the Trust Fund has received only one contribution, from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, to which I would like to express my gratitude (details are contained in the annex to the present report). I would strongly encourage Member States to consider contributing to this important Fund.

38. At the same time I would like to draw the attention of donors to the Peace Fund established by OAU as an essential component of its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. The United Nations can assist in facilitating contacts between OAU members and potential donors to foster development of African logistical capacity through contributions in kind. Close coordination between OAU and the United Nations Secretariat will be essential in this regard.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

39. At present, 22 African countries are contributing almost 2,500 troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations. I am grateful for their efforts, which show clearly that enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity can help advance the cause of peace, not only in Africa, but around the world.

40. Further progress in the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity would only be possible with the determination of the African States themselves. In this regard, I have attempted to identify in this report some of the major developments in Africa which have brought new possibilities for action.

41. However, support from non-African Member States will continue to play a crucial role in the process. In this context, I welcome the international community's renewed focus on Africa. The intensive discussions that have taken place over the past two years have contributed to a greater political awareness of needs, brought clarification of a number of vital principles, and established a conceptual framework for action to build African peacekeeping capacity.

42. It is now essential that the political will that has been manifested during this period, including the relevant resolutions and statements of the Security Council, be translated into practical action. This will require readiness to share information and expertise; strengthening of ongoing political support, which may include support for deployment, when appropriate, of United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa; the strengthening of training for peacekeeping; and the allocation of adequate logistical and financial resources.

43. In the present report, I have described the ongoing efforts within the United Nations in support of this process. While the problems facing Africa are immense, I would like to suggest a number of additional steps through which incremental progress may be made:

- The formation of a working group composed of African and non-African States directly involved in the provision of training assistance;

- The provision of funding, including scholarships, that could allow African military officers, particularly those serving with OAU and subregional arrangements, to participate in short-term exchanges with United Nations peacekeeping staff;

- Consideration of deployment of United Nations liaison officers to regional organizations under appropriate circumstances, as suggested by the Security Council;

- Continued efforts by standby arrangements experts to promote further cooperation by African States within the United Nations standby arrangements system;

- Further use of the United Nations standby arrangements system to help match needs with available resources;

- Communication to the Secretariat by Member States of information on their peacekeeping training programmes;

- Establishment of a special peacekeeping programme for African police officers.

44. As I have indicated, many of these efforts could be supported through contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund. I am also drawing the attention of donors to the important role that can be played by the OAU Peace Fund.

45. The United Nations experience in resolving African conflicts attests to the significant role which could be played in Africa through peacekeeping. The recent setbacks that we have experienced in peacekeeping efforts in Africa and

the recent emergence of new threats to stability within the continent should not be seen as grounds for discouragement or disengagement. Rather, they should be viewed as a call for renewed cooperation by all States Members of the United Nations in favour of Africa's search for peace, development and democracy.

46. A combination of determination, perseverance and vision on the part of African leaders and commitment by the international community to support their efforts is vital for peaceful progress within Africa as well as for enhancing Africa's contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. The United Nations Secretariat stands ready to assist in making this partnership as effective and as fruitful as possible.

ANNEX

United Nations Trust Fund for Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping in Africa

The United Nations Trust Fund for Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping in Africa was established on 8 July 1996.

	United States dollars[a]
Revenue	
Contributions - United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (July 1996)	250 745
Interest	15 816
Subtotal	266 561
Expenditure	
Ghana UNTAT seminar	50 676
Zambia UNTAT seminar	16 823
Kenya logistics course	28 214
Standby team visit to southern Africa	19 743
Subtotal	115 456
Estimated available	151 105

[a] All figures remain tentative, since not all obligations have been liquidated at the present time.